Technical Assistance for Public Water Systems

The Idaho Drinking Water Newsletter

Department of Environmental Quality Idaho Drinking Water Program

2003, Number 31

Reminder to public water systems

All water meters must be NSF approved

In Idaho, if you are a public water system, the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems require that all materials used to construct public drinking water systems (i.e., those which come in contact with drinking water) must meet the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) Standard 61. This state requirement includes residential and commercial water meters.

NSF International is an independent, nonprofit certification and testing organization in the areas of environmental and public health.

NSF develops voluntary standards for various products and provides testing and certification against those standards. Devices listed as NSF-approved help to reduce the amount of lead that makes its way into drinking water.

Lead in drinking water results primarily from corrosion of material containing lead installed in building plumbing such as lead solder, brass, bronze, and other alloys containing lead that comes in contact with the water.

NSF Standard 61 is a testing procedure that measures and limits the amount of lead and other contaminants that a device may contribute to drinking water.

Exposure to low levels of lead over an extended period of time can have serious health effects. Too much lead can damage your brain, kidneys, nervous system, and red blood cells. Those at greatest risk, even with short-term exposure, are young children and pregnant women.

Specifically, Section 8 of NSF Standard 61 covers mechanical devices used to measure or control the flow of water used in treatment and distribution systems. These devices (known as in-line devices) include building valves, check valves, backflow preventers, meter stops, and water meters.

Products certified as meeting the NSF standard carry a certification mark. Some water meter manufactures still produce non-NSF 61 listed water meters. You can check to see if a water meter is NSF listed at **http://www.nsf.org/Certified/PwsComponents/Listings.asp?ProductType=Water+Meters&.** ■

NSF and the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems

Section 550.02 of the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems (IDAPA 58.01.08) outlines the standards for materials used in public drinking water systems:

"**Materials.** Materials which are used to construct public drinking water systems and which have water contact surfaces must comply with applicable AWWA standards and ANSI/NSF standard 61 or NSF standard 53 or 58, unless otherwise approved by the Department on a site specific basis. Corrosion control shall be taken into account during all aspects of public water system design."

The Idaho rules are consistent with the 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), which required the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a performance standard to govern the leaching of lead from devices intended to dispense water for human consumption. The EPA turned to the National Sanitation Foundation for measuring and certification criteria. The result was that NSF Standards 60 and 61 were approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), and adopted by EPA.

CCR Certification due Oct. 1

The CCR for calendar year 2002 was due July 1, 2003. The CCR certifications for the 2002 annual CCR are due October 1.

Community water systems must submit a letter of certification stating that the CCR was distributed or made available to consumers. If you have already mailed or e-mailed your certification, it is not necessary to submit another one.

DEQ included a sample CCR Certification form in the CCR templates mailed to all community water systems in April. The certification form can be found at DEQ's web site at **http://www.deq.state.id.us/water/dw/ConsConfRpt2002_CertForm.doc.**. ■

Proposed rule making

DEQ proposes revisions to Operator Certification Rule

Rules requiring operators of all community and non-transient non-community public water systems in Idaho to be certified went into effect in April 2000. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's Drinking Water Program is responsible for operator certification.

In order to strengthen the operator certification program, DEQ has proposed rule making to set standards by which fees will be collected for operator applications, certification exams, certification renewals, and course evaluations for continuing education units (CEUs).

Some of the additional proposed changes to the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems include the following:

- definition of program terms,
- specific certification requirements,
- separate eligibility criteria for certifying treatment operators and distribution operators,
- length of the certification renewal cycle,
- number of CEUs required per certification renewal cycle, and
- responsibility for certificate signatures.

DEQ entered into negotiated rule making in June of this year with interested parties and reached an agreement on the proposed rule making for the fee standards. (Basically, negotiated rule making is a process by which representatives of DEQ and the stakeholders affected by a rule making seek to reach consensus on the terms of the proposed rule.) Next, a public hearing was held August 27 in Boise, and written comments were accepted by DEQ through September 3, 2003.

DEQ will present the final proposal to the agency's Board of Environmental Quality in November 2003, with a recommendation that the Board adopt the proposal as a pending rule. If the Board adopts the proposal, the pending rule goes before the 2004 Legislature, and if approved, will become effective immediately upon conclusion of the legislative session.

Questions regarding the proposed rule making should be directed to Chris Lavelle, DEQ, at 373-0486. ■

CEUs available to attending operators

EPA to conduct Stage 1 DBPR satellite training

EPA will be conducting satellite training on the Stage 1Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule (Stage 1DBPR) on September 24 that is designed for state, tribal, and local water utility personnel and technical assistance providers who are active in the drinking water program.

The training will give a quick overview of how to comply with the chlorine, chloramines, TTHM, HAA5, and TOC requirements of the Stage 1 DBPR.

EPA satellite training for Idaho will be held **Wednesday, September 24** at two locations:

- **Post Falls:** North Idaho College Work Force Center, 525 West Clearwater Loop, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. Please notify Sheila Bruning at (208) 769-1422 or **sbruning@deq.state.id.us**.
- **Twin Falls:** College of Southern Idaho Campus, Canyon Bldg., Room 110, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. Please notify Pat Hazen or Steve Staufer at (208) 736-2190 or **sstaufer@deq.state.id.us**.

Advance notification is necessary to guarantee a slot because seats are limited. Since there will be a 30-minute break for lunch, DEQ recommends that you bring a lunch. For training materials and additional information, visit **http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwa/satellite. html.** ■

DEQ Web Site Links

Here are some recent links that DEQ added to its web site:

Drinking Water Security

http://www.deq.state.id.us/water/water1.htm#security

Safe and reliable drinking water is vital to every community. Water utilities are in the forefront of ensuring that our state's water systems are protected against a variety of threats that could affect their core mission of assuring an uninterrupted supply of safe drinking water and maintaining an adequate supply of water for fire fighting. Find out about new security requirements for public water systems.

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Utility consolidation has many advantages

Four state PWSs merge with larger systems

Within the last year, four of Idaho's small public drinking water systems made the difficult decision to merge with larger viable systems. In all four cases, the systems faced major operational and financial challenges as they attempted to comply with state regulations and provide safe drinking water to their consumers.

Three of the systems are situated on Lake Pend Oreille's Cape Horn. The Cape Horn Water Users Association, Cape Horn Estates Water Association, and Pend Oreille Pines Water Association recently merged with the Bayview Water and Sewer District. The fourth system, the Riverbend Water Company, located in the northern part of the state, consolidated with the city of Post Falls.

Cape Horn systems

The Cape Horn systems were all unfiltered surface water sources with simple disinfection and therefore, in violation of the Surface Water Treatment Rule. The intermittent use of the mostly vacation homes made a filter plant problematical and expensive, even for slow sand filtration.

Working with the DEQ Coeur d'Alene regional office, the systems approached the nearby Bayview Water and Sewer District Board seeking the annexation of the three water systems. After public meetings and evaluating the costs required to support a new filtration system, the Cape Horn systems and the board agreed to consolidation.

About 90% of the costs were covered with a loan from the DEQ-administered Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund, and about 10% with federal grants. The drinking water and engineering staff of the Coeur d'Alene DEQ office were instrumental in finding these financial resources and providing assistance with the applications.

Post Falls

The Riverbend Water Company, which supplies water to an industrial and commercial area near the Washington state line west of the city of Post Falls, will soon tie into the Post Falls water system. This action will remove Riverbend's two wells, which have corrosive water, from production.

The Riverbend water system will also serve as a conduit to a nearby area known as Majestic View. A tie-in will be made to that area later this summer through the Riverbend distribution system. Majestic View has three wells that also have problems with corrosivity and these wells will no longer be used for drinking water.

Consolidation has its benefits

If a system is struggling because of major technical, financial, or managerial deficiencies, then annexation or consolidation may be the appropriate option. Consolidating with larger systems has its benefits - it increases the level of technical expertise available, and a larger customer base can absorb the cost of needed system improvements.

The four systems above determined that it was in their best interest to consolidate in order to improve service, to protect public health, and lower long-term costs. The decisions reached by these systems were voluntary, but with the assistance of the DEQ staff, they were able to reach their goals. If you are considering consolidation or just have questions about the options available, contact your local DEQ regional office.

Remember, the goal of any water system is to assure safe, reliable, and affordable drinking water to the consumer. One way to achieve this goal may be through the creation of regionalized water systems that incorporate one or more small water systems. ■

DEQ web site links *continued*

Arsenic information

http://www.deq.state.id.us/water/dw/arsenic.htm

Idaho DEQ's latest web page on arsenic is now up and running. The site contains important information about the revised Arsenic Rule, health effects, geology, maps, and exemption applications. Additional links to more information about arsenic can be found at the web site.

Guidance Documents

http://www.deq.state.id.us/water/dw/pws_guidance_documents.htm

View drinking water guidance documents developed by DEQ to assist public water systems in complying with federal and state drinking water rules and regulations.

US EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline provides information about contaminants and their potential health effects, and much more at **1-800-426-4791**. The Hotline is available Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., EST.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Class/Sponsor	Location	Date
Membrane Technology ★	*Boise*	*September 25*
Basic Laboratory Methods ★	*Blackfoot*	*October 7-8*
Basic Laboratory Methods ★	*Nampa*	*October 21-22*
Anaerobic Digestion/Soils ★	*Meridian*	*November 5*
Operation & Maintenance ★	*Gooding*	*November 12*
Operation & Maintenance ★	*Boise*	*November 13*
Hands on Pumps/Motors and WW Systems ★	*Sandpoint*	*November 18*

For further information, call:

★ *Brown Environmental, Inc. 1-800-543-4358 or for the Boise area, 208-465-5725. Fax: 208-465-8081*

Radiological Rule

Time is running short for community water systems that intend to submit radiological samples in order to be eligible for "grandparenting" exemptions under the Radiological Rule. Samples must be in by **December 31, 2003** to be considered for eligibility.

Issue Number 29 of Idaho's Drinking Water Newsletter has more details on what makes an eligible sample, and can be downloaded at **http://www.deq.state.id.us/water/dwnewsletter/H2O_Bulletin_29.pdf.**

Important Note: ***Idaho DEQ is aware that there are a few out-of-state laboratories that did not submit radiological results to DEQ regional offices or health districts as required. If your system submitted samples for radium-228 to an out-of-state laboratory, you may want to contact that laboratory to ensure that it sent the results to the appropriate DEQ office or health department.*** ■

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